

President's Corner

ISO•MOS•WSB

by Wayne Bell

I admit at the outset: This is an appeal for a volunteer to chair an MOS Committee on the World Series of Birding. This person could either participate as a WSB team member or just enjoy the competition as an observer. The rewards are special in either case. To learn more, please read on.

The WSB is the brainchild of Pete Dunne, author and current director of New Jersey's Cape May Bird Observatory. Now entering its 27th year, it is an offshoot of a century's worth of NJ Big Day birding, part of a national assessment of resident and migrant bird species that takes place in early May. Dunne has turned Big Day census into a contest in which teams compete to see the greatest number of species in a 24-hour period. The original venue was the entire state of NJ, but this has since been refined to include restricted real estate such as Cape May County, any other specific county of choice, and Cape May Island. New categories have been added to accommodate digital camera photography, digiscoping, and Big Sit. In addition to such "adult" team categories, youth teams compete on a

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The Maryland Yellowthroat

Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society

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PHOTOS SELECTED, ATLAS GOES TO PRESS

Thanks to the many photographers who submitted species and habitat photographs for the second MD/DC *Atlas*. The *Atlas* Board had a difficult time making their final decisions from so many wonderful images. In the end, we selected photos for their visual interest, beauty, and ability to illustrate "breeding" birds and their habitats. The identity of the photographers was revealed only after all the photos had been chosen.

Congratulations to *Stan Arnold, Robert Ampula, Scott Berglund, Melissa Boyle, David Brenneman, Jim Brighton, David Brinker, Philip Brody, Steve Collins, Craig Koppie, Dennis Coskren, Ralph Cullison, Monroe Harden, Mark Hoffman, Bill Hubick, George Jett, John Landers, Charles Lentz, Rick Mandelson, Sean McCandless, Danny Poet, Evelyn Ralston, Fran Saunders, Kurt Schwarz, Bill Sherman, Eric Skrzypczak, Gary Smyle, June Tveekrem, Gary Van Velsir, and David Ziolkowski.*

We have submitted the photos—one for each of the 200 species accounts, plus habitat photos and some additional shots for the front and back covers—to the Johns Hopkins University Press. While the final choice of photographs remains with them, they have indicated that all the photographs we put forward appear to meet their criteria and will probably be used.

In the long run, we did have to purchase one image (Black Rail), but all the others are of Maryland/



Well-earned satisfaction is evident all around as Vince Burke, Senior Editor at Johns Hopkins University Press, takes delivery of Atlas text and photos from Jane Coskren, Walter Ellison, and Nancy Martin. (Photo courtesy of JHU Press.)

DC birds or photographs taken by Maryland/DC photographers. We particularly want to thank the Frederick Bird Club and the family of the late Gary Smyle for donating his photographs to the effort. In addition, many thanks to Bill Ellis and Les Eastman for facilitating the judging process.

JHUP plans to publish the second MD/DC *Atlas* in Fall 2010—in plenty of time for holiday gifting. They hope to be able to solicit advance orders of the book at next year's MOS conference in June. While we do not yet know the retail cost of the *Atlas*, MOS members will be eligible for a prepublication discount.

—Karen Morley
Atlas Committee

Congratulations

to *Mark Hoffman*, who scored Maryland bird #400 when he saw (and photographed) a Yellow-headed Blackbird in Washington Co on Aug 3.

A Sharp-tail by any other name...

It's official: the American Ornithologists' Union has dropped the wordy "sharp-tailed" designation and these handsome (sharp-tailed) birds are now a succinct "Nelson's Sparrow" and "Saltmarsh Sparrow."

The Maryland Yellowthroat Newsletter of the Maryland Ornithological Society, Inc.

Editor: Lydia Schindler
lydiaschindler@verizon.net
301-977-5252

Designer: Suzanne Probst
msprobst2@verizon.net
410-992-3489

Calendar Editor: Andy Martin
apmartin2@comcast.net
301-294-4805

Chapter Chatter: Jean Wheeler
jswheeler44@msn.com

Proofreader: Ann Weeks
annweeks@erols.com

Mailing list: Helen Horrocks
hlh_37@yahoo.com
301-831-6315

MOS web site: <http://www.mdbirds.org>

Webmaster: Taylor McLean
taylormcl@comcast.net

Anyone is welcome to contribute articles or ideas that would be of interest to other birders. Copy may be mailed or e-mailed to Lydia Schindler by September 20, 2009 for the November/December 2009 issue.

*Illustrations pages 1 and 6 ©M. Suzanne Probst.
Photograph page 8 ©George Jett.
Photograph page 10 ©Bill Hubick
Photograph page 13 ©Kevin Kalasz.*

President's Corner *continued from page 1*

statewide basis at elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Until 2009, MOS fielded WSB teams that included some of Maryland's best birders. For example, in 2008 the MD Yellowthroats—Zach Baer, Jim Brighton, Bill Hubick, and Mikey Lutmerding—tallied 187 species to take the Cape May County Award. In fact, Zach Baer was a youth participant before YMOS was even established; not only was he on the winning team in 2008, he was also a new recruit for the Lagerhead [sic] Shrikes, who won the whole thing in 2009 with 229 species statewide.

Thanks to the work of YMOS Chair George Radcliffe, for the past several years the MOS has also sponsored youth teams. Our youth teams have represented us well, despite their having to compete with other teams in their age groups on a statewide basis: MOS Chuckleheads won the middle school division in 2008 with 152 species; MOS Monster Peeps placed 5th in 2009 with 155 species.

Thanks again to George Radcliffe, it has been my pleasure to coach the YMOS high school team for the past three years. Preparation begins in the fall, with training excursions to such places as Chincoteague and Bombay Hook NWR and additional days afield on the Eastern and Western Shores. Many of you will remember our Eastern Shore Birdathon, a two-day fundraiser last March for which the youngsters logged 132 species and raised nearly \$700 in pledges. The times afield, support of the parents, development of species identification prowess by sight and sound, and learning about the relationship between birds and habitat are really priceless rewards for the time spent.

The 2009 MOS high school team consisted of Amanda Spears (captain), Christina Brinster (whose mom was our driver, earning a "Stop! Stop! Back Up! Award"), and Zach Gent. We agreed to start our day shortly after midnight in an endeavor to log nightjars (successful) and owls (not). As we drove from the environs of Cape May proper through Bellplain State Forest, the

heavens opened up. So we whistled our best imitation of a Screech Owl—no owls responded, but before the rains had ceased we had logged Hermit and Swainson's Thrushes on the basis of their calls.

It was like that all day: a lot of work, fleeting sightings, and great rewards. Before they were through, the team had ticked Red-headed Woodpecker, Mississippi Kite, Cape May Warbler, Whimbrel, and White-faced Ibis. The total of 155 species bested the total of the previous year by 1. The young birders were in competition with themselves, and they did great. I will never forget the closing moments of the day, when we all stood together in the middle of Cape May Meadows, surrounded by the din of a chorus of frogs, deepening twilight, and a 360-degree lightning show. No birds there, but no matter.

The WSB has evolved into one of birding's most significant annual events. And it continues to evolve. Last year two bicycle teams competed for the competition's green award; the winners of the Carbon Footprint Award recorded 134 species. MOS has been a major participant over the years and has earned the right to recommend ways in which the competition might be improved.

We really need a leader who can put a new adult team together and work with YMOS to make our youth teams truly representative of our statewide organization. Please step up to the scope. You will be richly rewarded.

BOARD BULLETIN

- Former Maryland Congressman Wayne Gilchrest has joined MOS's Alternative Energy Committee. The group's mission is to develop a comprehensive policy on sources and uses of alternative energy.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS: FREDERICK, MAY 15-17, 2009

It's been more than 10 years since the last MOS conference in Frederick County, and some 223 birders—ignoring the recession—signed up. The field trips, of course, were a big enticement, and Kathy Calvert did an outstanding job of masterminding their organization and scheduling.* There were listers' trips for Carroll, Frederick, and Washington Counties. Bob Ringler led his always-popular butterfly trip, and noted photographer Wil Hershberger took a group of photographers to Audrey Carroll Sanctuary to give pointers on birding photography.

This year we were fortunate to have Dr. James Rising from the University of Toronto give a Sparrow Workshop; needless to say, it proved very popular. As a follow-up on Saturday, Bonnie Ott and James Rising led a sparrow field trip to Frederick grasslands.

Friday night President Wayne Bell presented an award to Lilypons Water Gardens, in appreciation of their many years of sharing their unique facility with birders. Sharon Brinster, a YMOS mom, was presented with a certificate thanking her for the hours she has dedicated to chauffeuring the YMOS kids team.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Doug Tallamy, professor and chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, addressed "Native Plants, Insects, Birds and the Future of Biodiversity in Suburbia." As one of our conference evaluations said, "Doug took a dubious-sounding topic and turned it into a gripping presentation, one of the best we've ever had." Other evaluations confirmed this, tying Doug Tallamy with Doug Gill as most popular conference speaker over the last 11 years. I heard people discussing his presentation throughout the weekend; it made quite an impact.

The Silent Auction and Raffle were the domain of Maryanne Dolan and her volunteers. Maryanne showed her usual flair for presenting avian "objets" in the best possible light; her success is quite an accomplishment when you consider she is dependent entirely on donations. An excellent job, Maryanne! Thank you. This year's proceeds, \$1,511, went to the Catoctin Forest Alliance.

The Research Poster Session, though smaller than usual, was predictably very popular. The three poster presenters found themselves mobbed by interested birders.

Keith and Beth Hamilton of Wild Birds Unlimited in Germantown brought an exciting array of items for our perusal. For the first time ever, I received a thank-you letter from the displaying store saying how much they had enjoyed meeting us and also noting that their sales exceeded any off-site show they have ever done—and they enclosed a donation of \$100 for MOS. Thank you, Keith and Beth.

At the Saturday night Business Meeting, MOS Historian Don Messersmith described how for the past year he has been researching MOS records to identify individuals who have belonged to MOS for 50 years or more. Don read the names of 20 people eligible for the new 50-year MOS membership pin and certificate. Four of them were present. Don presented Dot Gustafson, Chan Robbins, Stuart Robbins, and John Weske with their certificates and pins. Wayne Bell presented a Chapter Achievement Award to the Baltimore Bird Club for their involvement with the Lights Out Baltimore! Program.

Our conference ended at Sunday lunch with Bob Ringler's traditional tally and overview of our three days of birding—a great way to finish up. Thanks, Bob. This year we saw a collective 149 species. Highlights

included Common Moorhen and Yellow-crowned Night-Heron at Lilypons, Dickcissel at Antietam Battlefield, and Double-crested Cormorants, apparently nesting, on the Potomac River in Washington County.

As always, thanks go to all of our conference volunteers. We couldn't do this without you.

—Janet Shields
Conference Chair

*Kathy performed "above and beyond" the usual job specs when she had to recruit replacements for three-trip leader David Smith at the last minute. On the eve of the conference, the house next door to David's was smothered with a natural gas explosion. The neighbors were not home at the time, and Dave, his wife Carol, and their beloved pooch were all fine, but their house imploded on one side and was temporarily condemned. [Fortunately, the damage turned out to be less severe than at first appeared.]

Attention MOS Artists!

The 2010 Pin Contest deadline is January 15, 2010. The rules are simple: The bird must be appropriate for the conference site (Chestertown); it must contain the phrases "MOS" and "2010;" the artist must be a member of MOS; and entries must be in HARD COPY. Put your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, chapter affiliation, and the species on the back of each entry. Send entries to John Malcolm, 10205 Kindly Court, Montgomery Village, MD 20886. To see all the rules, and more tips about designing pins for the contest, visit the MOS web site or contact John Malcolm at 301-977-5788 or smudgie@comcast.net.

MARYLAND/DC RECORDS COMMITTEE STATUS REPORT AS OF JULY 18, 2009

BY PHIL DAVIS, MD/DCRC SECRETARY

The MD/DCRC has reached the following decisions since the last committee status report was published in *The Maryland Yellowthroat*. This report covers MD/DCRC review packages 123 through 126.

MD/DCRC report numbers are in brackets. These records will be addressed in additional detail in a future issue of Maryland Birdlife. No new “state” species were added with these decisions. The official species totals for Maryland and DC remain at 435 and 330, respectively.

More information on the MD/DCRC can be found on the committee’s web pages at the following URL:

<http://www.mdbirds.org/mddcrc/rcindex.html>

MD RECORDS ACCEPTED:

Aechmophorus species, *Aechmophorus sp.* [MD/2008-010]
Governor Run Road, Port Republic, Calvert County
09-Feb-2008

“Scopoli’s” Shearwater, *Calonectris diomedea diomedea*
[MD/2005-048]
Atlantic Ocean, Pelagic Zone, Worcester County
28-Aug-2004

Neotropic Cormorant, *Phalacrocorax brasilianus*
[MD/2008-046]
Potomac River, Sandy Hook, Washington County
09-May-2008

White-faced Ibis, *Plegadis chihi* [MD/2008-024]
Sewage Treatment Plant, Berlin, Worcester County
05-Apr-2008

Ross’s Goose, *Chen rossii* [MD/2008-012]
Kershner’s Pond, Burkittsville, Frederick County
28-Feb-2008 through 02-Mar-2008

Gyr Falcon, *Falco rusticolus* [MD/2005-016]
Gambrills, Anne Arundel County
16-Jan-2005 through 17-Jan-2005

Yellow Rail, *Coturnicops noveboracensis* [MD/2003-226]
North Beach, Calvert County
26-Mar-1989

Piping Plover, *Charadrius melodus* [MD/2008-055]
Rocky Gap State Park, Flintstone, Allegany County
30-Apr-2005

Little Gull, *Larus minutus* [MD/2007-046]
Violette’s Lock, Seneca, Montgomery County
24-Mar-2007

Sabine’s Gull, *Xema sabini* [MD/2008-067]
Sandy Point State Park, Annapolis, Anne Arundel County
06-Sep-2008

Least Tern, *Sternula antillarum* [MD/2006-056]
Laurel, Howard County
10-Jul-2006

Sooty Tern, *Onychoprion fuscatus* [MD/2006-094]
Violette’s Lock, Seneca, Montgomery County
02-Sep-2006

Eurasian Collared-Dove, *Streptopelia decaocto*
[MD/2007-094]
Blackwater NWR, Cambridge, Dorchester County
19-Aug-2007

Eurasian Collared-Dove, *Streptopelia decaocto*
[MD/2008-052]
L-Meadow Farm, Woodbine, Howard County
02-Jun-2008 through 11-Jun-2008

White-winged Dove, *Zenaida asiatica* [MD/2008-056]
Truitt Landing, Girdletree, Worcester County
17-Aug-2008

Calliope Hummingbird, *Stellula calliope* [MD/2007-010]
Forman’s Branch Bird Observatory, Kingstown,
Queen Anne’s County
06-Dec-2006 through 10-Dec-2006

Ash-throated Flycatcher, *Myiarchus cinerascens*
[MD/2006-283]
Centreville, Queen Anne’s County
17-Dec-2006

“Audubon’s” Yellow-rumped Warbler, *Dendroica coronata auduboni* [MD/2008-048]
Idylwild WMA, Federalsburg, Caroline County
18-May-2008

MD RECORDS ACCEPTED-GROUP:

Oceanodroma species, *Oceanodroma sp.* [MD/2003-119]
Marshall Hall, Charles County
19-Sep-2003

MD RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED:

Yellow-billed Loon, *Gavia adamsii* [MD/2008-165]
Assateague Island National Seashore, Berlin,
Worcester County
14-Dec-2008

Reddish Egret, *Egretta rufescens* [MD/2006-141]
Crocherson, Dorchester County
16-Sep-2006

Gyr Falcon, *Falco rusticolus* [MD/2007-143]
North Branch, Allegany County
17-Dec-2007

Yellow Rail, *Coturnicops noveboracensis* [MD/2007-117]
Lilypons Water Gardens, Buckeystown, Frederick County
01-May-2007



Fall Count 2009



The annual Fall Seasonal Count sponsored by MOS will take place in the MD/DC area on the traditional third weekend of September, either Saturday, September 19, 2009 and/or Sunday, September 20, 2009. (The MOS Board has left the choice of day to local chapters and coordinators.)

In areas without an identified coordinator, individual parties submit their results directly to the statewide coordinator.

Everyone is encouraged to participate, regardless of skill level. Every pair of eyes helps. Besides, it is great fun.

The guidelines for this count are the same as those used for all seasonal counts. Local coordinators will assign volunteers to specific areas, honoring requests whenever possible. Party leaders are responsible for tracking party miles and times, names of participants, and documentation for unusual sightings.

A checklist compilation form is available on the MOS website, in the "Annual Counts" section:

<http://www.mdbirds.org/counts/fall/fallcounts.html>.

The list includes the species one would expect to find in Maryland during this season. Those species on the list requiring further written documentation are noted with asterisks. All write-ins require full details.

County coordinators who have volunteered so far are listed on the MOS website. Anyone already organizing a count or interested in volunteering as a coordinator for a county that has no coordinator is encouraged to contact the state Coordinator.

If you don't have web access or you are interested in counting in a county without a coordinator, you can contact the state Fall Count Coordinator directly. Individual parties or other groups (e.g., hawk watch sites, field trips) who count in areas without a coordinator, but have data for the count period, are asked to submit their data along with details the area that was covered, participants, and coverage statistics directly to the state Fall Count Coordinator by October 17.

Deadline for submitting completed reports to your county coordinator is no later than October 9, 2009.

County compilers are asked to submit compilations to the state coordinator by November 1.

Please plan to join the fun, and have a great day birding!

Chuck Stirrat,
Fall Count Coordinator
13318 Hunt Ridge, Ellicott City, MD 21042-1155
410-531-2417
ChuckS@msualum.com

Records Committee *continued from page 4*

Royal Tern, *Thalasseus maximus* [MD/2006-102]
Violette's Lock, Seneca, Montgomery County
02-Sep-2006

Royal Tern, *Thalasseus maximus* [MD/2006-143]
Hagerstown, Washington County
03-Sep-2006

Arctic Tern, *Sterna paradisaea* [MD/2003-124]
North Beach, Calvert County
19-Sep-2003

Le Conte's Sparrow, *Ammodramus leconteii* [MD/2005-032]
Bryans Road, Charles County
30-Mar-2005

DC RECORDS ACCEPTED:

Yellow Rail, *Coturnicops noveboracensis* [DC/2007-102]
17-Nov-1893

DC RECORDS NOT ACCEPTED:

Long-billed Curlew, *Numenius americanus* [DC/1999-091]
Potomac River
11-Apr-1842 (date specimen was cataloged)



ALLEGANY AND GARRETT COUNTIES

Several Maryland birders traveled to Puerto Rico this Spring—and love was in the air (down there). My wife *Donna* and I went for a week. *Bill Hubick* and his bride *Becky* made the trip. *Marshall Iliff* went with his girlfriend *Neyha* and they returned as “fiancé” and “fiancée.” Our own club members *Mikey Lutmerding* and *Jo Anna Leachman* went down in April, and they came back as Mr. and Mrs. Lutmerding. Kudos and congratulations to them!

Our club’s schedule for the upcoming year will include a follow-up talk from *Marie Brady* about her grassland songbird research in Western Maryland. *Kyle Aldinger* will speak about his research with Golden-winged Warblers in West Virginia. We are also planning a presentation about Puerto Rico.

—J.B. Churchill

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

Pat and Juanita Tate travel and bird a lot. In April, they did Arizona. Looking for a Starbucks in Scottsdale, they found 4 species of ducks plus Black-necked Stilts at a shopping center pond! They saw Gila Woodpeckers, White-winged Dove, and Anna’s and Costa’s Hummingbirds at their hotel. Highlights at Sweetwater in Tucson included Harris’s Hawk, Scott’s Oriole, and Yellow-headed Blackbird. In Ramsey Canyon they spotted Broad-tailed, Magnificent, and Black-chinned Hummingbirds, Canyon Wren, and Painted Redstart. The San Pedro Riparian area featured Green-tailed Towhee, Lazuli Bunting,

and Black-throated Gray Warbler. The *Tates* missed the Sinaloa Wren in Patagonia but they had fun trying to turn Yellow-rumped Warblers into the wren. The *Patton’s* yard yielded Violet-crowned, Broad-billed, Black-chinned, and Anna’s Hummingbirds and a lone Cassin’s Kingbird. They stopped at the Desert Botanical Gardens to see the Dale Chihuly glass exhibit and found Cactus Wren, Phainopepla, and Curved-billed Thrashers. All this plus baseball and dinner with friends and family in Scottsdale and children and grandchildren time in Sierra Vista.

In July the *Tates* were on the road again, to Florida and South Carolina. At Paynes Prairie near Gainesville, they had great looks at Mississippi and Swallow-tailed Kites. They also watched about 100,000 Mexican free-tailed bats emerge from the University of Florida Bat House at dusk. In Orlando they added Limpkin. The Francis Beidler Swamp in South Carolina on the way home was quite “birdy,” including a very cooperative bobwhite that posed for pictures. Heat and humidity are tolerable when the birding is great.

Stan and Elaine Arnold traveled to Texas, mostly West Texas, during Spring break in April. They had spent 11 days in the lower Rio Grande Valley in December; this time they were looking for migrants. Beginning at Estero Llano Grande SP, one of the finest birding venues in the valley, they found Elaine’s lifer Red-crowned Parrot flying over, plus some other really cool birds such as 8 Wilson’s Phalaropes spinning crazily in circles, Least Bittern, Swainson’s Warbler foraging on the ground, and a roosting Parauque. Next, to the tiny, 15-acre Frontera Audubon Thicket in the town of Weslaco. In December it had taken them four visits to see a Crimson-collared Grosbeak; the bird was still there in April. This time Stan finally got a lifer Brown-crested Flycatcher, and Elaine picked up lifer Lesser Goldfinch and Lesser Nighthawk. Traveling west, they arrived at Salineno at daybreak; after

the better part of an hour, they found what they came for, Muscovy Duck, 4 wild birds flying from the river up to some trees. Taking the old dump road out of Salineno, they spotted a Red-billed Pigeon. At Zapata, a White-collared Seedeater was singing but they could not spot it. However, Elaine got a lifer Black-Chinned Hummingbird. As retired military, Stan booked a room at Laughlin AFB near Del Rio; Elaine found her lifer Bell’s Vireo and Lark Bunting there.

On to Big Bend: Elaine soon tallied more lifers: Scott’s Oriole, White-throated Swift, Acorn Woodpecker, Black-chinned Sparrow, and Canyon Wren. The next day, accompanied by Brady Surber, a young and very competent local birder, they visited Cottonwood Campground: Black-throated Sparrow (lifer for Elaine), Lucy’s Warbler, a dozen Swainson’s hawks, Zone-tailed Hawk, and a nesting pair of Gray Hawks, plus a Gray Flycatcher (confirmed by voice). At Pine Canyon Trailhead, they found Gray Vireo.

Heading west, the *Arnolds* stopped at the Christmas Mountain Oasis, an impressive bird sanctuary created by Carolyn Ohl-Johnson and highly recommended by Stan; here they found their lifer Lucifer Hummingbird, as well as Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Verdin, Green-tailed Towhee, Scaled Quail, and a Curve-billed Thrasher nesting in a nest box! At Fort Davis SP, they heard but did not see Montezuma Quail. Turning back East, they met up with a local birder, Rhandy Helton, who took them out to South Llano River SP; there they found Black-capped Vireo and Golden-cheeked Warbler, both lifers. Bottom line for the trip: 7 life birds for Stan, 32 for Elaine!

CAROLINE/QUEEN ANNE COUNTY

Debby Bennett from Caroline County spent two weeks in England in June with friends. It was her first visit to England; London, a boat trip on the Kennet and Avon Canal, and parts of Cornwall were all she could manage. While this was not a birding

trip, she was prepared with birding guide and binoculars. She definitely got some of the most common birds identified. Next trip hopefully will include packing better binoculars and scheduling a walk with someone well versed in British birds.

HARFORD COUNTY

Kermit "Spike" Updegrave of Bel Air, and a member of Harford County Bird Club for 36 years, finally reached his life's pinnacle. Spike did have to go to Nome and Gambell, Alaska to see his 700th ABA area bird. Lucky 700 was the Aleutian Tern. He didn't stop there. He also added Emperor Goose, Bluethroat, and Bristle-thighed Curlew. The man is ecstatic and out of control. He thinks making 800 could be a problem. We certainly wish him good fortune!!

Fourteen members of the Harford Bird Club, led by *Dave Ziolkowski* and *Dennis Kirkwood*, traveled to Panama in early July, visiting the famous Canopy Tower and Canopy Lodge. Participants included *Joe and Melody Stevens*, *Sue and Larry Procell*, *Donna and George Yorkston*, *Jean Kirkwood*, *Macrina Seitz*, *Jerry Strickroth*, *Mark Johnson*, *Joanna Fredrickson*, and *Olivia Morris*. The trip total was 271 birds, with highlights including Blue Cotinga, Little and Great Tinamous, Vermiculated Screech Owl, Semiplumbeous Hawk, Great and Common Potoos, and White-tipped Sicklebill. For added excitement, the group experienced back-to-back earthquakes of 6.2 and 5.2 magnitude centered only 60 miles away. Canopy Tower really rocks!

—*Dennis Kirkwood*

HOWARD COUNTY

In late April 2009, *Gayle and Bill Hill* spent an enjoyable week in south Florida, birding from Fort Lauderdale to Key West, supplemented with a day trip to the Dry Tortugas. The Mangrove Cuckoo was a key target bird, and it lived up to its reputation of being elusive; they spent several days searching mangroves but did not see anything resembling a cuckoo. On

the third day, after an unsuccessful search around Dagny Johnson Key Largo Hammock Botanical SP, the Hills were sitting in their car deciding where to go next when they heard the loud call of a Mangrove Cuckoo. A few seconds later they saw it fly into a tree on the other side of the highway, where it sat in plain sight for several minutes before disappearing back into the mangroves. Another trip highlight among the various specialty birds they saw was a Yellow-faced Grassquit at Fort Zachary Taylor SP in Key West.

Dick and Kate Tufts enjoyed south Florida and the Dry Tortugas one week later and were thrilled with the specialty birds of the Tortugas. Magnificent Frigatebirds made numerous appearances and hundreds of Brown Noddys flew all around Fort Jefferson. A Black Noddy and a Gray Kingbird were also spotted. Their accommodating boat captain made a detour around Middle Key so they could see the only colony of Masked Boobys nesting in North America.

In April, *Jeff Culler* spent three days of birding along the Rio Grande Valley and another day birding at the King Ranch. Starting in McAllen, along with three other birders and guide Roy Rodriguez, Jeff birded most of the hot spots along the Rio Grande River. His visit to the Frontera Audubon Center was most rewarding, as he was able to observe two local rarities: Blue Bunting and Crimson-collared Grosbeak. He was delighted to find Masked Duck at Laguna Atascosa NWR. At the King Ranch—the largest privately held ranch in the world (it took an hour just to drive to the destination entrance gate)—he succeeded in seeing Audubon's Oriole and Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl. A great four days of birding added 31 birds to his life list. After a quick family visit to San Antonio, it was back home for our spring migration.

—*Kate Tufts*

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Club members took strong exception in June to an opinion piece in the *Montgomery Gazette*, which called

for a moratorium on the effort by Maryland DNR to extirpate exotic Mute Swans from Chesapeake Bay. Responding to a lengthy letter and an eye-catching cartoon decrying "the killing, torture, cruelty and scapegoating" of Mute Swans by DNR, *Gail Mackiernan* rejoined that "it is unfortunate that many are vocal in seeking protection for this voracious and aggressive bird while showing no concern over its impacts on our many beautiful native creatures or on the Bay environment itself." *Don Messersmith* wrote, "Of course, the Mute Swans are beautiful birds, but as an introduced species along with Rock Pigeons, House Sparrows and European Starlings, they don't belong here.... I fully endorse the DNR plan to eradicate these destructive birds from the Bay." *John Combs* wrote, "I do not understand why there is so little concern for the native wildlife that the Mute Swans are displacing," sentiments echoed by *Meredith Stewart* and *Robert Winter* in additional letters to the editor.

—*Chris Wright*

PATUXENT BIRD CLUB

The club is conducting regularly-scheduled field trips for the public. These include a weekly weekday trip to Lake Artemesia, which draws a large response, as well as two monthly trips to local parks.

—*Fred Fallon*

SOUTHERN MARYLAND

The most important event in southern Maryland was the dedication of Chapman State Park as an Important Bird Area (IBA). Dr. David Curson, director of bird conservation for Audubon Maryland-DC, formalized the designation on June 7.

Chapman's 2,254 acres are home to 18 species of forest interior dwelling birds, including several species on the National Audubon Society's watch list—Wood Thrush, Kentucky Warbler, and Prothonotary Warbler. A survey conducted by Southern Maryland birders *George Wilmot*,

continued on page 8



Receiving awards for their efforts to protect Chapman SP are (front row, from left) George Wilmot; Pat Bright, representing the Maryland Park Service; T. Bob Lukin, standing in for Cora Fulton; and Carol Gheblian. In the second row are Dr. David Curson and Del. Peter F. Murphy. (Photo courtesy of George Jett.)

Carol Gheblian, and Cora Fulton between 1999 and 2000 contributed to the criteria used to designate the park as an IBA.

Developers had wanted to turn this area, with its unique natural resources and old growth forest, into a new city. However, in response to the work of concerned citizen groups, in 1998 the property was rescued from the Charles County politicians and developers by then-Governor Parris Glendening. The State purchased the land and, in late 2002, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources named the area Chapman State Park.

If you want to read more about this dedication, go to http://www.somdnews.com/stories/06172009/indyfea85403_32179.shtml. For details about the park, including directions, go to <http://www.chapmanforest.org/>.

—George Jett

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Because the same people were rotating through terms as president year after year, the club decided two years ago to switch to having three presidents a year, each serving for three months. The system has been working well.

For many years, the club has been leading weekly bird walks with 5th grade students for the public schools' Environmental Science Facility.

—Ann Mitchell

MARYLAND'S NEXT 10 BIRD SPECIES

BY MATT HAFNER AND BILL HUBICK

The full, unabridged document is available at http://www.billhubick.com/docs/Maryland's_Next_Ten.pdf. It lists and analyzes 16 Honorable Mentions and another 22 "Long Shots," all the way down to #63, the single-vote Western Gull. There are also two excellent supplements, "Maryland's Next 10 Nesting Bird Species" by Walter Ellison and "Hart-Miller Island's Next 10 Bird Species" by Gene Scarpulla. An additional appendix will contain most of the raw data, including each participant's votes.

Since 2001, when Marshall Iliff wrote the original *Maryland's Next 10*, Maryland's hard-working birders have tracked down *seven* out of the *Next 10* species: Eurasian Collared-Dove (#1), Cave Swallow (#2), Say's Phoebe (#4), Townsend's Warbler (#5), Western Meadowlark (#6), Reddish Egret (#8), and Allen's Hummingbird (#9; pending review). From the "Runners Up" category, we added Northern Lapwing (#12) and Calliope Hummingbird (#15), plus one species from the "Long Shots," Neotropic Cormorant. Additional surprises since 2001 have included Tropical Kingbird, Anna's Hummingbird, Inca Dove, and Cape Verde Shearwater. The state list—which numbered 417 species in 2001—currently stands at 435, with potential additions still in review.

For the 2009 update, we made a number of changes to polling and analysis. We invited a larger panel of voters, and processed a total of 39 lists. We asked each participant to rank his or her votes from one to ten; the ranking significantly enriched the data, allowing numerous additional views and nearly eliminating ties. Clear winners quickly emerged within the highest ranks.

As Marshall Iliff noted in the original *Next 10*, detectability remains a critical factor in voting for—and of course, finding—our next species. Due to the cruel laws of space and time (and jobs), the vast majority of rarities that visit Maryland certainly sneak by undetected. Undoubtedly, many of the top votes on this list have already occurred, some of them probably annually. Some have even been reported, though not documented sufficiently for inclusion on the state list.

However, there have been many changes in birding since 2001 that are relevant to detectability. We now have more birders, more feeders, vastly superior communication tools, and a more widespread familiarity with East Coast vagrancy. Perhaps most importantly, the number of birders who carry digital cameras has increased exponentially. The value of this new wealth of documentation can hardly be overstated, and it will certainly play a role in future state firsts. Illustrating all of these points, Lynn Davidson joked that we might speed up the process of locating Maryland's first Golden-crowned Sparrow by placing "Have you seen me?" posters in Wild Bird Centers this winter.

If Kirtland's Warbler and Sprague's Pipit occupy one end of the detectability spectrum, then vagrant hummingbirds top the list on the other. In the wake of the June 2009 Violet-crowned Hummingbird sighting in Virginia, John Hubbell commented that one could probably enjoy a decent success rate by simply listing 10 hummingbirds. Our understanding of hummingbird vagrancy has come a long way since 2001. In the original *Next 10*, hummingbirds accounted for only 10 of the 150 votes: five for Allen's, four for Black-chinned, and one for Broad-tailed. In this update, many people listed two hummingbird species. It's a difficult approach to refute. East of the Mississippi, there are now records of 12 species of hummingbirds that have yet to be documented in Maryland: Black-chinned, Broad-billed, Broad-tailed, Buff-bellied, Blue-throated, Magnificent, Costa's, White-eared, Green Violetear, Green-breasted Mango, Violet-crowned, and the FL-only Bahama Woodstar.

Two other categories of birds hold major potential for new state records: pelagic species and austral migrants. Although both of these groups contain many contenders, few species could compete among the Top 10 or Top 20. We joked that “Random Pelagic Species” and “Random Austral Migrant” would be wise votes if they were permitted.

With no further ado, here is the official *Maryland's Next 10 Bird Species*. We hope you'll enjoy the list, as well as the analysis that follows. For each high-ranking species (and most others), we provide details on patterns of vagrancy, East Coast records, and predictions on when and where to find the species in Maryland.

THE TOP TEN

1. Black-chinned Hummingbird

[Jim Stasz's yard, November].

The recent increase in vagrant hummingbirds has not gone unnoticed among Maryland birders! This species had by far the most first-place votes, and over half the voters placed it in the Top 3. DC and WV have one record each, VA has four, MA has four, NJ has four; they have become annual throughout the Southeast. On the East Coast, Black-chinned Hummingbirds have arrived almost exclusively in November and December, and some of the more southerly birds have successfully wintered. Maryland has done well with banding late-season hummingbirds, so one will surely be documented in the near future. Based on sheer numbers, this one will likely be found in central Maryland (where the people are), but our pick is Jim Stasz's yard. Why? Can you name another yard in Maryland with a better track record for vagrant hummingbirds? Two Rufous, two Calliope, and counting! (30/39 lists, 243 points, 14 first-place votes)

continued on page 10

The Top Ten			
#	Species (# of 1st place votes)	# of Lists	Points
1	Black-chinned Hummingbird (14)	30	243
2	Little Egret (7)	29	204
3	Bell's Vireo (4)	25	151
4	MacGillivray's Warbler (1)	19	113
5	White-tailed Tropicbird (1)	18	106
6	Brown Booby (1)	17	99
7	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	17	94
8	Golden-crowned Sparrow	16	60
9	Slaty-backed Gull (3)	15	110
10	White-winged Tern (1)	14	75
The Runners Up			
11	Kirtland's Warbler	14	68
12	Pink-footed Goose	14	63
13	Long-billed Murrelet	13	52
14	Yellow-billed Loon (2)	12	73
15	Green Violetear	11	58
The Honorable Mentions			
16	Violet-green Swallow	10	44
17	White-tailed Kite	8	38
18	European Storm-Petrel (1)	7	41
19	Herald Petrel (1)	7	36
20	Bar-tailed Godwit	7	29
21	Clark's Grebe (1)	6	49
22	Boreal Owl	6	23
23	Shiny Cowbird	5	25
24	Pacific Golden-Plover	5	22
25	Black-tailed Godwit	4	25
26	Garganey	4	23
27	Broad-tailed Hummingbird	4	20
28	Snowy Plover	4	19
29	Great-tailed Grackle	4	18
30	Spotted Redshank	4	17
31	Red-billed Tropicbird	4	13
The Long Shots			
32	Sprague's Pipit	3	11
33	Brown-chested Martin	3	10
34	Brown Noddy (1)	2	16
35	Ivory Gull (1)	2	16
36	"Western" Flycatcher	2	13
37	Brambling (1)	2	11
38	Ferruginous Hawk	2	10
39	Mottled Duck	2	7
40	Hermit Warbler	2	6
41	Lewis's Woodpecker	2	5
42	Masked Booby	2	5
43	Black-throated Sparrow	2	4
44	Broad-billed Hummingbird	2	3
45	Mountain Plover	1	9
46	Western Bluebird	1	9
47	Redwing	1	8
48	Lesser Sand-Plover	1	6
49	West Indian Whistling-Duck	1	6
50	Black-billed Magpie	1	5
51	Eurasian Woodcock	1	5
52	Band-tailed Pigeon	1	4
53	Red-throated Pipit	1	4
54	Elegant Tern	1	3
55	Brown-crested Flycatcher	1	2
56	Gray Flycatcher	1	2
57	Great Gray Owl	1	2
58	Lesser Goldfinch	1	2
59	Cassin's Kingbird	1	1
60	Dusky Flycatcher	1	1
61	Lesser Nighthawk	1	1
62	Scott's Oriole	1	1
63	Western Gull	1	1

Maryland's Next Ten *continued from page 9*

2. **Little Egret** [Assateague Island Causeway, June]. Little Egret remains a clear favorite among Maryland's birders. It is the highest-ranked species that has not yet been found from the original *Next 10*, and Maryland birders recall records from DE (Bombay Hook, Little Creek WMA) and VA (Chincoteague). There are additional records from MA, RI, NH, and the birds are annual in Atlantic Canada. Little Egret is now on many Maryland birders' radar and is actively sought amidst gatherings of waders. Naysayers point out that several birds (Bombay Hook, Atlantic Canada, etc.) may represent returning individuals, so actual vagrancy events may be rarer than they appear. Records are concentrated from mid-April to early July, with just a few records after that when the species loses its distinctive breeding plumage and soft part colors become harder to assess among abundant juvenile Snowy Egrets and Little Blue Herons. (29/39 lists, 204 points, 7 first-place votes)
3. **Bell's Vireo** [Rarity Roundup, November]. The impressive number of East Coast records makes Bell's Vireo another clear choice for the *Next 10*. There are records from 13 East Coast states from ME to FL, and many states have three or more records; NJ has six. MA has had its first three records in as many years, RI had its first in Nov/Dec 2007, and NC has had three in the last five years. Bell's Vireos are annual in FL in winter. This species earned its place as a solid #3 despite many voters' concerns about detectability and difficulty of ID. Records from the East Coast range from early to mid-September to Christmas Bird Count season; few have been detected beyond early January. A report of a banded bird on Assateague on 8 Sep 1956 (Ries, R.P. 1960. Autumn record for Bell's Vireo in Maryland [*Maryland Birdlife* 16:27]) was possibly correct, but not accepted by the MD/DCRC. (25/39 lists, 151 points, 4 first-place votes)
4. **MacGillivray's Warbler** [Vessey Orchard, December]. This species' well-established pattern of vagrancy to the East Coast also prevailed over some voters' concern about detectability. There are records from VA, PA, NJ, NY, CT, NC, GA, and FL. Did we mention that MA has had 12? September records are known, but the vast majority of East Coast records are from October and November, with a few wintering birds and just a single spring record from NY. Although a notorious skulker, any Mourning Warbler after mid-October should receive immediate attention. Maryland has a report of a MacGillivray's banded on Kent Island on 6 Oct 1964, and an Ocean City CBC report of an *Oporornis* sp. on 28 Dec 1979 (*American Birds* 34:445) that was believed to be either a Mourning or MacGillivray's, but unfortunately was not photographed (19/39 lists, 113 points, 1 first-place vote)
5. **White-tailed Tropicbird** [Little Seneca Lake, September]. This overdue addition to the state list is just a matter of time. Rare but regular in the Gulf Stream off Cape Hatteras, White-tailed Tropicbirds have been recorded from most East Coast states from ME to FL. It is likely to be found at your favorite reservoir in the wake of a storm event or documented on a well-timed pelagic or sea watch, probably between July and September. Marshall Iliff pointed out that anecdotal reports from fishing boat captains suggest this species has already occurred within the state. (18/39 lists, 106 points, 1 first-place vote)
6. **Brown Booby** [OSV Zone, Assateague Island, July]. If this bird comes as a surprise to you, it shouldn't. VA and NJ have seven records each, three in the last five years. It is nearly annual in NC, with additional records in NY, RI, and MA (4). Aside from the outrageous record of an adult in the VA mountains in fall 2008, all of the sightings have been coastal, with many birds seen feeding close to shore or loafing on sandbars and pilings. This could be the great reward of a summer trip to the coast, as it is most likely from late May to October. (17/39 lists, 99 points, 1 first-place vote)
7. **Sharp-tailed Sandpiper** [Horsehead, September]. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper received nearly three times as many votes as the next most popular shorebird, Bar-tailed Godwit. DE and NJ each have two accepted records and VA has four. As noted by Iliff in 2001, a record from the Hunting Creek mudflats, Fairfax, VA (14-23 Sep 1983) probably flew over Maryland waters of the Potomac River. As summarized by Iliff, most of the 15+ records from the East Coast have been juveniles concentrated between mid-September and mid-October. Other records from May to August show that this



Brown Booby (#6) has already fallen—and at the exact time and place predicted! On July 22, 2009, Frode Jacobsen photographed a juvenile Brown Booby off Assateague Island (and Nat Donkin of the NPS did the same on August 3). Zach Baer, who ranked Brown Booby #1, reigns as the top voter. (This striking portrait was captured by Bill Hubick in Hawaii on March 18, 2006.)

species should be considered at all times during migration. DE's two records were adults found at Bombay Hook on 8 Aug 1993 and 5-6 August 2002. (17/39 lists, 94 points)

8. **Golden-crowned Sparrow**

[A feeder in Howard County, December]. Now recorded at least eight times in NJ and two out of the last four Aprils in MA, this attractive West Coast species has gotten Maryland birders' attention. Records of East Coast vagrants are primarily of wintering birds from Atlantic Canada to FL (October to April) and northbound birds in April. Look for this species amidst wintering White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows, around fields, feeders, and wooded edges. Listen for its plaintive song among White-throated choruses in April. (16/39 lists, 60 points)

9. **Slaty-backed Gull** [Salisbury Landfill, January]. Most voters who selected Slaty-backed Gull ranked it highly, so this species would rank much higher (#5) if points were weighted over total votes. Perhaps some voters did not realize that Maryland's possible Slaty-backed Gulls have not been accepted. Others might have been discouraged by the identification challenges. However, with the major increase in records in the Northeast (and the exponential increase in megapixels at the ready), Maryland is due its first uncontested Slaty-backed Gull. Consider this: As of 2001, just one East Coast state had a record (NY), but since 2005 the species has been found in NH (3), MA (4), and PA (1), along with additional records from NY, Atlantic Canada, and throughout the continent's interior. Although some of Maryland's most historically productive gull spots have reduced access and/or productivity, most gull lovers are optimistic. Strong

votes for locations include Salisbury Landfill, Skimmer Island, Schoolhouse Pond, and Conowingo Dam. The widely-twitched adult at Conowingo Dam in February 1999 was subtly inconsistent in a few features (width of white trailing edge, precise wing pattern, mantle shade) and considered Not Accepted by the MD/DCRC. Several other reports were not sufficiently documented. (15/39 lists, 110 points, 3 first-place votes)

10. **White-winged Tern** [Fox Hill Level, Assateague Island, August]. While this species was regular in the 1970s and 1980s, it has declined markedly, and there are just two records from adjacent states since 1995. It seems very possible that only a few birds were responsible for the majority of the records, and that they have since perished. We can hope the 2008 DE record marks a return to patterns of old. Fortunately for Maryland, the Mid-Atlantic region seems to be the epicenter of this mega-rarity's forays to North America. With at least seven records for coastal DE and five or more in VA (Chincoteague), a well-documented visit to Maryland seems inevitable. The question is how many times the bird will make landfall before it is detected and documented. Iliff (2001) references a well-documented report from Point Lookout SP in 1994 that was ultimately deemed not unequivocal. The optimistic among us should carefully rule out this species whenever we encounter Black Terns in Maryland, especially along the coast. Check underwings for black axillars and be prepared for non-breeding plumages, as this is how the latest DE and VA birds were found. (14/39 lists, 75 points, 1 first-place vote)

THE RUNNERS-UP

11. **Kirtland's Warbler** [Violette's Lock, May]. Slipping from #10 in 2001 to #11 this time around is likely due to the lack of recent "vagrant" records and the increase in records for many other species. While many states surrounding Maryland have records—VA (4), WV (5), and several in PA—none is more recent than 1998. Given the species' increasing population, this is a bit surprising, and more sightings of migrants away from Lake Erie should be expected. ME recorded a remarkable singing bird in the Kennebunk Plains in June 2008, so prospecting breeders could occur in appropriate habitat. Western Maryland might be the most likely place to turn one up, but there are more observers in spring along the C&O Canal in Montgomery. Keep your eyes peeled in mid-May and September. (14/39 lists, 68 points)
12. **Pink-footed Goose** [Great Oak Pond, November]. Formerly a mega-rarity known only from Atlantic Canada, over the last 10 years Pink-footed Goose has occasioned multiple records in PA, NY, CT, MA, VT, and Newfoundland, and a pair was documented in RI. The exact number of birds involved is unknown, but there is no denying that multiple Pink-footed Geese are arriving in the Northeast each winter. MD birders should continue carefully scanning both Snow and Canada Goose flocks on the Eastern Shore from November to March. (14/39 lists, 63 points)
13. **Long-billed Murrelet** [Rocky Gap, November]. East Coast records of Long-billed Murrelet are split between the Atlantic coast and inland bodies of water. Records from nearby states include MA, NY, PA, NJ, NC (2), SC, and FL (3), many of these

Maryland's Next Ten *continued from page 11*

within the last 10 years. Reports peak in November and December but span October through March; MA has an anomalous early September record. Anyone observing an inland alcid should also carefully consider Ancient Murrelet (records from PA, NY, and MA), which may be more likely than typical Atlantic alcids. (13/39 lists, 52 points)

14. **Yellow-billed Loon** [Loch Raven Reservoir, April]. The record of an alternate-plumaged bird on the Susquehanna River in PA in May 2007 was obviously fresh in the minds of several voters. That's not the only record, either, with three from NY (two upstate, one coastal), three from TN, and another in GA, all in the last 12 years. Save for a coastal NY record, all the reports are from inland locales, but that is likely due to ease of observation on inland water bodies. The Chesapeake Bay actually works against us here and has probably

hidden a Yellow-billed Loon or two a few hundred yards offshore or tucked away in a seldom-scanned cove. Maryland already has three reports of Yellow-billed Loon, but none has had the detail to be conclusively verified. Look for this species from November to March, and be ready for one in April or May, too. Careful study and thorough documentation are a must! (12/39 lists, 73 points, 2 first-place votes)

15. **Green Violetear** [JB Churchill's yard, August]. This bird caught everyone's attention when it appeared in Terra Alta, WV, less than half a mile from the Maryland line, in the summer of 2003. Unlike most vagrant hummingbirds, Green Violetears tend to show up in the summer (June to October) and at areas with a bit of elevation. There are very few records from the Gulf Coast, which is usually at the forefront of hummingbird vagrancy, and a cluster of records

in the Appalachian Mountains. In addition to the WV record, Green Violetears have shown up in NJ (coastally—an exception to the “elevation” theory), NC (3), SC, GA, ME, ON, and several places in the Midwest. Watch for the dominant large green hummingbird at your feeder this summer! (11/39 lists, 58 points)

The Panelists: Harry Armistead, Stan Arnold, Zach Baer, Marcia Balestri, Tyler Bell, Gwen Brewer, Jim Brighton, Carol Broderick, Mike Burchett, J.B. Churchill, Steve Collins, Barry Cooper, Lynn Davidson, Phil Davis, Paul DeAnna, Sam Dyke, Walter Ellison, Tom Feild, Jim Green, Matt Grey, Ron Gutberlet, Matt Haffner, Joe Hanfman, Rob Hilton, Mark Hoffman, Hans Holbrook, John Hubbell, Bill Hubick, Marshall Iliff, George Jett, Ray Kiddy, Mikey Lutmerding, Gail Mackiernan, Joel Martin, Dave Mozurkewich, Paul O'Brien, Paul Pisano, Danny Poet, Dave Powell, Bob Ringler, Dan Small, Jim Stasz, and Mike Walsh.



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Birds of Note—by Les Roslund

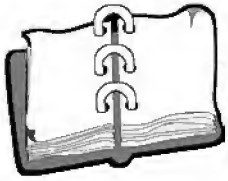


Photo of Roseate Spoonbill in North Assawoman Bay taken by Kevin Kalasz on June 26, 2009.

- The most fascinating and tantalizing visits to Maryland by any bird this year were provided by a ROSEATE SPOONBILL that first showed up in Delaware in late June. Maryland birders, especially the listers, swarmed to the Fenwick, DE site, then loitered near the state line in hopes of getting a spoonbill sighting in Maryland. The first report came from Joe Hanfman of Columbia, who observed a Maryland fly-over on June 25. There was no photograph to document that visit, but around 8 AM on June 26 the efforts of Kevin Kalasz of DE provided the photograph. Kevin reported the bird to be south of the MD/DE line in North Assawoman Bay about one-half mile south of DE Route 54. The bird lingered there for about 20 minutes before returning to its favored DE haunt, about one-half mile north of the state line; there it has been viewed and enjoyed by many, and it was still present as of July 22. A small number of lucky birders witnessed other brief excursions into Maryland. Prior to these intermittent visits, there had been only two sightings of ROSEATE SPOONBILL in Maryland, and both were on Smith Island at the southern end of the state.
- In late May a two-day visit by a SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER gave birders of the region some more special enjoyment. Jim Green of Montgomery County found the bird in the Ingleside Area of Eastern Neck NWR in Kent County on May 26. By the end of the day the birding community was alerted, and as many as 20 additional birders joined Jim for the viewing. This lovely male in full breeding plumage was hawking insects along a hedgerow within good viewing distance from the Ingleside parking lot. The bird lingered through the 26th, and even stayed through the 27th while the parade of happy birders continued. On the 28th the bird was gone, not to be located again.
- The Assateague Island ORV zone, Worcester County, provided numerous great sightings as well as a couple that were truly awesome. High on any list was a YELLOW-NOSED ALBATROSS found on June 6 by

Stan Arnold of Anne Arundel County. This huge bird was interacting fairly far out on the water with a Great Black-backed Gull, which it clearly dwarfed. After a five-minute battle, both birds departed to the north, leaving Stan to frantically assemble his notes and his thinking in order to best assess what that bird really was. If accepted by the records committee, this would be the first land-based Maryland sighting of the species. A second splendid ORV zone sighting was of a EUROPEAN WHIMBREL on Apr 24. This bird was seen by Jim Stasz of Calvert County during a routine visit to the area. If accepted by the records committee, this would be only the second Maryland record; the first was in 2006.

- On July 6 Jan Reese of Talbot County reported a young male KING EIDER in one of the coves of Poplar Island, which lies in the Chesapeake Bay just a few miles from Tilghman Island. The bird was loosely associated with a small group of Surf Scoters. More than two weeks later, on July 21, this bird was still present, providing excellent views for a group of dedicated birders who happened to be on an already-scheduled tourist visit to the island. Though KING EIDER can be regularly found along the Maryland coast in winter, this species at this location at this time of year is very unusual.
- The year has been a good one for BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCKS in our region, starting on May 30 at Lake Churchill, Montgomery County, when Keith and Beth Hamilton of Montgomery County reported seeing a flock of seven or more. A few days later, on June 2, a flock numbering eight was seen by Danny Bystrak of Anne Arundel County flying close to Selby Landing, Jug Bay, Anne Arundel County. Two days later the flock was spotted by Hans Holbrook, again at Jug Bay but this time near Wootens Landing. A single BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK, possibly crippled, has spent most of the year in neighboring Delaware.
- ANHINGAS usually show up somewhere in our region each year, and 2009 was no exception. On May 3 Jim Moore of Rockville, Montgomery County, had the good fortune of sighting one beside an impoundment at Lilypons Water Gardens in Frederick County. This bird carried female-type markings, so it could have been a female or an immature male. Later in the month, on May 23, Kevin Graff and John Dennehy of Baltimore saw two ANHINGAS fly over Susquehanna State Park in Harford County.
- In mid-June a NEOTROPIC CORMORANT appeared in the vicinity of Violette's Lock in Montgomery County, and it stayed around long enough to provide both challenge and enjoyment to numerous birders as they tried to distinguish it from numerous other cormorants nearby. The bird was found on June 17 by Dave Czaplak of Montgomery County, and it stayed through July 1. The birding community stepped up with excellent directions to possible roosting spots, a clear review of the field marks, and nice tips regarding the best time of day to look for it.



MOS Calendar

September-October 2009

Tuesday, September 1

Baltimore. Lake Roland. First in a series of weekly walks to follow the progress of fall migration. Habitats include woods, lake, streams, and marsh. This park has an impressive bird list, including songbirds, herons, shorebirds, and raptors. Meet 8:30 AM on footbridge. [From I-695 take Jones Falls Expwy/I-83 south to Northern Pkwy exit, and go left (east) to next light, Falls Rd. On Falls Rd turn left (north). After third light (Lake Ave), take immediate right (before Falls Rd bridge), then curve left and right again (avoid Light Rail entrance) and go 0.5 mile to the dam. Park and walk to footbridge.] Leader: Joan Cwi, 410-467-5352 or jafjsc@verizon.net.

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn Mansion. First in a series of monthly presentations and slide shows. Tonight: "Bird-Window Collisions: A Lethal Issue for Architecture and Conservation." *Dr. Daniel Klem*, Professor of Ornithology and Conservation Biology at Muhlenberg College, PA. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. [From I-695, go south on I-83/ Jones Falls Expwy. Take Northern Pkwy exit right (west). Move to left lane and turn left onto Cylburn Ave, left (south) onto Greenspring Ave; turn left again almost immediately at stone gate and follow drive to circle in front of mansion, 4915 Greenspring Ave. If access is blocked by construction, return to Greenspring Ave and turn right (north), then right on Cylburn Dr and right again on new driveway up the hill to the back of the grounds, and proceed towards and around the main mansion house.] For more info, contact Pete Webb at 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Wednesday, September 2

Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. Monthly survey of bird activity at the wetland. Automatically cancelled in bad weather (rain, fog, etc). Scope useful. [From I-95, take Hanover St/exit 55, McComas St (last exit before tunnel eastbound, first after tunnel westbound), north on Key Hwy, which turns west; first left Lawrence St, left onto Fort Ave, continue east to gate into the fort. From the JFX/I-83, go south to St Paul St exit, south on St Paul which becomes Light St, then left (east) onto Fort Ave; continue to end as above.] Meet outside the Visitor Center at 8 AM. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Baltimore. Evening Walks at Fort McHenry. Automatically cancelled in rain, fog, etc. See above listing for directions, but meet at 6 PM and park on Wallace St near main gate. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Thursday, September 3

MEETING. Frederick. Our kick-off meeting will feature *Kurt Schwarz* discussing "Trogon and Motmots of Western Mexico." 7 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

Saturday, September 5

Cecil. Turkey Point Migrants and Hawk Watch Kickoff. Half day. Join us for the traditional launch of the Turkey Point Hawk Watch, which runs every day from Labor Day weekend through Thanksgiving. Meet 7 AM at Turkey Point parking lot. From North East, take Rte 272 south about 11 miles. Leader: Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Howard. Butterflies through Binoculars at Meadowbrook Park [DeLorme 57-C6]. 2-3 hours. Enjoy searching for late-summer butterflies

and receive expert instruction on their identification. Easy walking on the paved path by the fields and marshes. Bring close-focus binoculars. Meet 9:30 AM at Meadowbrook Park east parking lot. Leader: Dick Smith, 410-997-7439. Facilities available.

Sunday, September 6

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. First in a series of casual Fall walks. Meet 8:30 AM at the mansion's front porch on Sun mornings for easy birding in Cylburn's gardens and urban forest. Expect to find a variety of migrant and resident birds. Beginning birders. [For directions to Cylburn, see Sep 1 listing.] No designated leader. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Howard. Woodland Walk at MPEA [DeLorme 57-C5]. Half day. Moderate walking through wooded trails and along river. Great area for migrants of all species. Field edges and thickets provide sparrow habitat. If time and birds warrant, we will also do the Trotter Rd loop. Prepare for wet grass and mud on the trails. Meet 7:30 AM at the Clegg Meadow off Southwind Cir. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, 410-461-1643 or krschwa1@verizon.net. No facilities.

Talbot. Bombay Hook and Delaware Bayshore. Full day. Passerines, wading birds, shorebirds, and more during height of fall migration. Bring lunch, sunscreen, insect repellent. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM or meet at MD Welcome Center (mile marker 97 on Rte 301) at 7:10 AM. Leader: Charles Hopkins, 410-763-8742.

Tuesday, September 8

MEETING. Allegany/Garrett. "Golden-winged Warblers on Grazing Areas in West Virginia." Speaker: *Kyle Aldinger*, West Virginia U. 7:30 PM at Compton Hall, Rm 327, Frostburg State U. Contact J.B. Churchill at jchurchi@atlanticbb.net for more info.

Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. See Sep 1 for details. Leader: Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or dterry12@verizon.net.

Wednesday, September 9

Baltimore. Evening Walks at Fort McHenry. Automatically cancelled in rain, fog, etc. See Sep 2 listing for directions, but meet 6 PM and park on Wallace St near main gate. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

MEETING. Cecil. Presentation TBA. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church at Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Thursday, September 10

MEETING. Howard. "A Field of Dreams: Restoration of Native Prairie for Grassland Birds in Maryland," by *Douglas Gill*, University of Maryland. Professor Gill's 10-year study of farm fields on the Eastern Shore has produced major, positive responses by non-game and game bird species. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Howard Co Rec and Parks, 7210 Oakland Mills Rd, Columbia. Info: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

MEETING. Talbot. Speaker: *Ron Gutberlet*. "A Year on the Road with North American Birds." Ron engaged in a Big Year in the Lower 48 in 2005. 7 PM at William Hill Manor Auditorium, Easton. Info: Cathy Cooper, coopercw@goeaston.net.

Saturday, September 12

PICNIC. Harford. Annual Fall Picnic at the home of Tom and Nancy Congersky. Starts at 1 PM, food served at 2 PM. Call Tom Congersky, 410-658-4137, for reservations and directions.

Howard. Rockburn Branch Park [DeLorme 57-C6]. Half day. Moderate walking through the woods and fields of our largest county park looking for migrants. Paths may be muddy. Meet 8 AM in parking lot on the left, just past the restored

schoolhouse. The park gate is just beyond Rockburn ES. Leaders: Karen Darcy and Kevin Heffernan, 410-418-8731 or KJHeff@aol.com. Facilities available.

Montgomery. Patuxent River Park. Half day. Joint trip with ANS. Driftboat on Patuxent River followed by trail walk. Migrant and resident songbirds and waterbirds; Sora likely. Meet 6:30 AM at park entrance gate. Fee of \$5/person for park program. Boat trip can be cool and a bit damp. Make reservations with leader John Bjerke, 240-401-1643. Co-leader: Paul Baicich.

Montgomery. Assateague Island/Coastal Worcester Co. Full day (to dusk). Bring food, water, sunscreen, and insect repellent. Focus will be migrant warblers, shorebirds, and rarities such as Lark Sparrow. Reservations required. Limit: 14. For reservations and directions, contact leader: Bill Hubick, bill_hubick@yahoo.com.

MOS BOARD MEETING. Hosted by the Baltimore Bird Club. 10 AM at Cylburn Mansion, 4915 Greenspring Ave, Baltimore. Contact Janet Shields, MOS Secretary, at janetbill@prodigy.net, for add'l info.

Washington. Blandy Experimental Farm and Sky Meadows SP, VA. Join naturalist Margaret Wester for a walk at Blandy Farm, home of the VA State Arboretum. Next, visit a colony of Red-headed Woodpeckers at Sky Meadows. Trip leaves from the DMV lower parking lot. Contact Ann Mitchell at 240-420-0808 for departure time. Remember to pack a lunch for this all-day trip.

Sunday, September 13

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. See Sep 6 for details. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Baltimore. Chimney Swifts at Dusk. Join the BBC SwiftWatch Team for "Swift Night Out" as Chimney Swifts pour into one of their favorite chimneys. Swifts are counted and results, nationwide, are listed at www.chimneyswifts.org. Baltimore has some of the highest counts in the nation. The swifts occasionally switch overnight roosting sites between the Hampden and the Conservatory (Druid Hill Park) chimneys, so we will post which chimney is being used on Thur, Sep 10, at <http://www.baltimorebirdclub.org>. Meet at 6:45 PM; come at 6:15 PM if the weather is cloudy or gray. For more info, contact leader: Joan Cwi at 410-467-5352 or jafjsc@verizon.net.

Caroline. Bird-banding in Chestertown with Jim Gruber, Bander. 8 AM. Great for kids. Adults welcome, too. Contact Danny Poet to register and for directions at 410-827-8651 or birder231@hotmail.com. For carpooling, meet at Roses parking lot, Denton, at 7 AM. Contact Debby Bennett at 410-479-1343 (work) or firefly5845@hotmail.com for info.

Harford. Jerusalem Mill. Meet at 7 AM at the Mill on Jerusalem Rd. Search the Little Gunpowder for early migrants and residents in this beautiful valley. Leader: Phil Powers, 410-679-4116 or birdsinmd@prodigy.net.

Montgomery. Pennyfield to Violette's Bird Stalk. Half day. In response to requests from our recent field trip questionnaire for a later start time, we will meet at 9 AM at Violette's Lock parking lot. We will carpool to Pennyfield Lock and walk up the C&O Canal towpath to Violette's Lock. This walk should net an interesting mix of late warblers, landbird migrants, a few first-show winter visitors, raptors, and waterbirds. If you plan to attend, contact leader: Jim Nelson, kingfishers2@verizon.net or 301-530-6574.

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Talbot. Tilghman Island for fall warblers and summer stragglers. Leader: Jan Reese, 410-745-2875. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM or meet at St. Michael's Village Shopping Center at 7 AM.

Tuesday, September 15

Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. See Sep 1 for details. Leader: Ruth Culbertson, 410-825-1379.

Baltimore. Rain date for Chimney Swifts at Dusk. See Sep 13 listing for info.

Wednesday, September 16

Baltimore. Evening Walks at Fort McHenry. Automatically cancelled in rain, fog, etc. See Sep 2 listing for directions, but meet 6 PM and park on Wallace St near main gate. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Howard. Henryton Road, Patapsco Valley SP. Half day. Walk along the Patapsco River looking for fall migrants. This is prime migration time and many species of forest birds expected. Mature woodlands provide excellent habitat for migrant thrushes. Plan for moderate walking and possible muddy trails. Meet 8 AM at bottom of Henryton Rd where it dead ends. Leaders: Joe Byrnes, 410-730-5329 and Jeff Culler, 410-465-9006. No facilities.

Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. One-third day. Migrant warblers, vireos, and sparrows. Meet 7 AM at Picnic Area 18 (on Ridge Rd, 1/2 mile below Nature Center). Reservations required. For reservations and directions call the leader: Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

MEETING. **Montgomery.** "Oriole Bias." Kevin Omland. Baltimore Orioles, with colorful and tuneful male but drab females, may seem typical to us. However, the general absence of song and elaborate color in females is actually rare in the oriole genus. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info, contact Steve Pretl at stevep@takomavillage.org.

Thursday, September 17

MEETING. **Caroline.** Kaitlin Mielke. "The Poplar Island Story." 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Saturday, September 19

FALL COUNT. Baltimore. We will tally all birds seen within the city and the county during this calendar day. Birders of all levels of experience are welcome and urged to participate. To avoid duplication of counting, contact coordinator Debbie Terry, 410-252-8771 or dterry12@verizon.net, for assignment.

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. See Sep 2 listing. Meet at Visitor Center. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

FALL COUNT. Caroline. If you would like to participate, please contact Debby Bennett (coordinator) at 410-479-1343 (work) or firefly5845@hotmail.com.

Cecil. Fall Season at Fair Hill. Part of our "Seasons at Fair Hill" series. Fall at Fair Hill means migrating warblers, flycatchers, vireos, and more. Our walk will take us through woods, stream valleys, and fields. Be prepared for a longish hike over trails that are narrow and may be steep and muddy in places. Meet at the Covered Bridge parking lot at Fair Hill at 8 AM. [From Rte 273, go north on Rte 316 (Appleton Rd) for about one mile and then enter Fair Hill at Black Bridge Rd on left. Follow this gravel road for about 2 miles to the Covered Bridge parking lot.] Parking fee, Honor System; bring small bills (\$3 MD residents; \$4 non-residents). Wear shoes or boots appropriate for walking. Leader: Ken Drier, kdrier@zoominternet.net.

FALL COUNT. Frederick. Kathy Calvert will coordinate our 10th county-wide fall census, in the absence of our regular compiler-extraordinaire, Mike Welch. Call Kathy at 301-698-1298 to be placed with a team or assigned a territory. Tally Rally at the Calvert's.

FALL COUNT. Harford. Help cover Harford Co and count in your favorite birding spot. Contact the compiler, Mark Johnson, for further instructions at 410-692-5978 or mark.s.johnson@us.army.mil.

FALL COUNT. Howard. Call Bonnie Ott to sign up and get info at 410-461-3361.

FALL COUNT. Washington. Contact Doris Berger, 301-739-8907, to participate.

Sunday, September 20

FALL COUNT. Anne Arundel. Contact compiler, David Gillum, at 410-266-8775 for more details.

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. See Sep 6 for details. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Harford. Winters Run Road. Meet at the P&R at Rte 24 and I-95 at 7 AM. Join veteran leaders Dave Larkin and Lynn Davis to enjoy one of Harford's rural landscapes and the fall songbird migration. Contact Lynn Davis at 410-569-0504 or lynnd@iximd.com.

Montgomery. Rock Creek Park, DC. One-third day. We've expanded our urban bird walks to accommodate persons who can meet only on weekends. Same great birds: migrant warblers, vireos, and sparrows. Meet 6:45 AM at Picnic Area 18 (on Ridge Rd, 1/2 mile below the nature center). Reservations required. For reservations and directions, call the leader: Wallace Kornack, 202-338-7859.

Talbot. Chester River Field Research Center (Chino Farms area). Warblers, thrushes; possibly banding 25+ species. Local contact: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651; on-site leader: Jim Gruber, 410-778-6851. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Tuesday, September 22

Baltimore. Broad-winged Hawks over Cromwell Valley Park. Diverse habitat includes stream, woods, and fields. Expect to see a variety of resident and migrant birds. Peak time for migrating Broad-winged Hawks if weather is right. Meet 8:30 AM at lot near Willow Grove Farm entrance. Leader: Dot Gustafson, 410-584-9509 or dotsg7@verizon.net.

MEETING. Washington. "Birds of Southern Africa." *Mark Abdy* will share photos and stories of his adventures in South Africa, Namibia, Zambia, and Botswana. 7:30 PM at the Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Call 301-797-8454 for directions.

Wednesday, September 23

Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Meet 7:30 AM to look for migrant and resident birds. Expect to walk 2-3 miles on gravel and dirt trails, with some uphill. Beginners welcome! Reservations required. Limit: 8. For reservations and directions, contact the leader: Claire Wolfe, 301-972-4278 or c_wolfe2003@yahoo.com.

Saturday, September 26

Baltimore. Jug Bay. Pontoon boat ride for viewing Soras. By reservation only. Limit: 16. Meet at 6 AM. Boat ride 7-10 AM at low tide to see Soras during peak migration at the wild rice wetlands, along with other marsh wildlife. Fee for boat ride \$6 per person. Walking around the park trails on dry land is free (but you won't see the Soras from there). Leader: Greg Kearns. Balt area contact, Pete Webb, pete_webb@juno.com or 410-486-1217.

Cecil. Cape May: Hawks or Hawk Food. Carpool with fellow club members for an easy 2-hour drive to Cape May, NJ, one of the nation's premier fall hawk watch sites. Spend some time on the hawk watch platform with the best in the hawk ID business. When you get tired of watching hawks, step onto the Boardwalk Trail for a look at some

of the things the hawks are eating. Meet 7 AM near Dunkin' Donuts at Big Elk Mall, intersection of Rtes 40 and 213 in Elkton. Bring breakfast, lunch, and snack, or money to buy food on the way. Dress and pack for a long day in the sun. Bring scope if you have one. Leader: TBA. Check club website, <http://www.udel.edu/cecilbirds/calendar.html>, for updates.

Frederick. Sugarloaf Mountain. Barbara Gearhart will lead us on a quest for fall migrants on Mt. Ephraim Rd and Sugarloaf Mtn. Walking may be uphill and vigorous, depending on where the warblers are. Reservations required. Please call Barbara at 301-371-3435 if you are coming.

Harford. Early-Bird Canoeing at Eden Mill. Take in a cool summer morning of natural history and easy exercise along one of upper Deer Creek's most scenic stretches. Dave Ziolkowski interprets the sights, sounds, and smells to make this trip a multi-sensory experience. Trip meets at 7:30 AM but space is limited, so reservations are first-come, first-commit. \$5 fee goes towards club donation to nature center. Call Dave at 443-299-8453 or djiolkowski@yahoo.com for info and reservations.

Howard. Font Hill Wetlands Park [DeLorme 57-B5]. 2-3 hrs. Ponds, stream, second-growth, cattail marsh, and deciduous woods. Paved paths and boardwalks. Mown areas allow additional access to edge vegetation. Meet 7:30 AM. Contact leader, Joe Hanfman, auk1844@comcast.net or 410-772-8424, for more info and meeting place. No facilities.

Montgomery. Upper Watts Branch Park, Rockville. Half day. Migrant warblers, vireos, thrushes, and assorted woodland residents. Meet 8 AM at corner of Princeton Pl and Fordham St. Reservations required. Limit: 12. Leader: Paul O'Brien, 301-424-6491.

Sunday, September 27

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. See Sep 6 for details. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Howard. Western RP [DeLorme 56-B3]. Half day. Moderate walking along field edges and woodland trails. Opportunity for warblers, sparrows, thrushes, and flyovers. Small pond may host shorebirds. Meet 8 AM at Carr's Mill Rd lot. Leader: Ralph Cullison, RMCullison@comcast.net or 410-442-2181. Facilities available.

Montgomery. Lois Y. Green Conservation Park, Gaithersburg. Half day. Explore the varied habitats of this new 204-acre park. Migrant/resident songbirds, raptors, waterfowl are possible. Meet 7:30 AM at parking lot on Snouffer School Rd. Reservations required. For detailed directions and reservations, call leader: Mark England, 240-207-3132 (home) or 240-375-4500 (cell).

Talbot. Annual fall excursion to Chincoteague NWR for Marbled and Hudsonian Godwits, variety of gulls, terns, and always good numbers of herons and egrets. This is also a good time for migrant Peregrine Falcons. We will also be on lookout for a good crab cake. Leader: Terry Allen, 410-829-5840. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM. Bring drinks and insecticide. Bring lunch if you wish; we will also stop at McDonalds at lunchtime and a local restaurant for dinner.

Monday, September 28

MEETING. Tri-County. "Gannets Galore." Newfoundland birding with *Larry and Jean Fry*. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury.

Tuesday, September 29

Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. See Sep 1 for details. Leader: Matilda Weiss, 410-337-2732.

Calendar *continued from page 17***Thursday, October 1**

SPECIAL LECTURE. Baltimore. Bird-banding talk at Natural History Society on Belair Rd. An illustrated slide program by *Dr. David Thorndill*, CCBC Professor, about catching, banding, and hypnotizing birds will be followed by a tour of the new headquarters (in progress) of the Natural History Society of MD (NHSM). (Lots of neat old dead stuff). This talk is to be followed on Sat with a bird-banding demonstration at the Essex campus of the Community College of Balt Co. [To NHSM HQ: From I-695, take exit 32A/Belair Rd/US 1 south (towards Overlea and Balt). Go south 1.4 miles to 3908 Belair Rd, a large building on the right (west) side of the road, across from St. Michael's church. Call 410-369-6879 if lost.]

MEETING. Frederick. Our speaker will be *David Smith* of the Aquatic Ecology Lab, USGS. His topic will be "The Horseshoe Crab and Shorebird Connection." 7 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

Friday, October 2

MEETING. Anne Arundel. "Hart-Miller Island: The Wondrous Birds, Insects, and History of this Unique Island in the Chesapeake Bay" by *Gene Scarpulla*, Balt City's Watershed Manager and expert on the birds and insects of Hart-Miller. 8 PM at the Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville. Contact Peter Hanan, 410-672-5672, for more info.

Friday-Sunday, October 2-4

Baltimore. Kiptopeke SP, Chincoteague NWR, and Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR. Contact leader Peter Hanan, 410-672-5672, by Sep 25 for reservations and info.

Saturday, October 3

Baltimore. Bird-banding demonstrations at Essex campus, Community College of Balt Co (CCBC). Joint trip of BBC and NHSM. Dr. David Thorndill will catch, band, and maybe hypnotize birds. This is a good chance to

photograph that elusive "bird in the hand." Contact David Thorndill, 410-256-3261, or dthorndill@ccbcmd.edu, for start time. Banding will take place by the tennis courts on the left. Call 410-369-6879 if lost.

Baltimore. Gwynns Falls and Leakin Parks. Walk from historic Dickeyville along a scenic trail by the Gwynns Falls, looking for migrant warblers, thrushes, and other songbirds. Meet at 8 AM. Leader TBA. For meeting place, contact Pete Webb at 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com, or check BBC website at <http://baltimorebirdclub.org>.

Caroline. Tuckahoe SP (Tuckahoe Creek IBA). Leaders: Danny Poet and Debby Bennett. Meet at the Woods Trail parking lot near the lake at 8 AM. Dress comfortably and bring binoculars if you have them. Questions, contact Danny Poet at 410-827-8651 or birder231@hotmail.com.

Frederick. Waggoner's Gap. This site, a small gap in the Kittatinny Mtns in south-central PA, is owned and maintained by PA Audubon, and it is an excellent place to see migrating raptors. Please call Tom Humphrey at 301-696-8540 to join the group.

Howard. Lake Elkhorn [DeLorme 57-D5]. 2-3 hours. Easy walking along the lake and to Forbay Pond. Migrants will be moving through. Warblers are generally in abundance, and the lake can turn up interesting surprises. Hawks are also possible. Meet 8 AM at Broken Land parking lot. No facilities. Leader: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

Montgomery. Little Bennett RP. Half day. Everyone welcome but we'll target new birders and focus on some birding basics. Join us for a slow-paced walk, listening for and observing common species. Late warblers and vireos, early sparrows, and some raptors possible. Limit: 8. For reservations, time, and meeting place, contact leader, Gemma Radko, 301-514-2894.

Sunday, October 4

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. See Sep 6 for details. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Howard. Photography Trip at Western RP [DeLorme 56-B3]. 2-3 hrs. Meet 8:30 AM at first parking lot on left after entering the park. Moderate walking on grass. Slow pace to allow plenty of time for taking photos. Photographers of all skill levels, using cameras ranging from simple to sophisticated, are encouraged to participate. Pond near entrance often has interesting shorebirds in October. Habitat includes fields, ponds, brushy areas, and woods, making for a good variety of birds and other fauna. Facilities available. For more info, contact June Tveekrem: June@SouthernSpreadwing.com or 410-715-3979. Each person must bring a camera.

Talbot. Ferry Neck for land birds and waterfowl. Leader: Les Coble, 410-820-6165. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Tri-County. Assateague Island for coastal migrants. Meet 7:30 AM in Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art parking lot on S Schumaker Dr on Beaglin Park Dr in Salisbury. Contact leader, Sam Dyke, at 410-742-5497 for directions and more details.

Tuesday, October 6

Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. See Sep 1 for details. Leader: Paul Noell, 410-243-2652 or myconut@verizon.net.

MEETING. Baltimore. Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn Mansion, 4915 Greenspring Ave. "Birding the Low Countries of Europe (Belgium and the Netherlands)." *Gary Van Velsir*. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. For more info, contact Pete Webb at 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com. For directions, see Sep 1 listing.

Indicates Field Trip

H Howard. Bon Secours Spiritual Center [DeLorme 57-B5]. 2 hrs. Meet 8:30 AM at visitor parking lot. Easy walking through the grounds of this spiritual retreat. Woods, fields, and hedgerows provide opportunities for a variety of birds. Leader: Michele Wright, 410-465-6057. Facilities available.

Wednesday October 7

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. See Sep 2 listing. Meet at Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Thursday, October 8

MEETING. Howard. "Birding Peru's Andes," by *Dave Harvey*. Three weeks of high-altitude birding was rewarded with colorful tanagers, woodpeckers, and nifty flycatchers. Hospitality and club bookstore 7:30 PM; meeting/program 8 PM at Glenwood Community Center, 2400 State Rte. 97, Cooksville. Info: Tom Miller, 410-795-7005.

MEETING. Talbot. Speaker: *Phil Davis*. "A Southern Oceans Expedition" A multi-media presentation on the scenery, birds, and other wildlife of the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Island, and the Antarctic. In January-February 2003, Phil and Barbara Davis cruised the Southern oceans and made 15 Zodiac landings. Their PowerPoint presentation features beautiful digital images and audio/video clips of landscapes, icebergs, penguins, other birds, and marine mammals. 7 PM at William Hill Manor Auditorium, Easton. Info: Cathy Cooper, coopercw@goeaston.net.

Saturday, October 10

H Anne Arundel. Hart-Miller Island, Baltimore County. Gene Scarpulla will lead this trip looking for some of the 286 bird species seen on the island. Limit 12. Meet 6 AM at Parole P&R. Boat returns at 3 PM. Contact Gerald Winegrad, 410-280-8956, to reserve a spot.

H Cecil. Turkey Point Migrants and Hawk Watch. A walk through the woods and fields for migrant

songbirds, plus a stop at the Hawk Watch station to see what is flying. Be prepared for a round-trip hike to the Point, a distance of about two miles. The pace will be leisurely. Most of the walking is on a gravel road with good footing, but there are hilly sections. Wear comfortable shoes/boots for walking. Bring drinks and/or snacks. Meet 8 AM at the Turkey Point parking lot. [From the town of North East, go south on Rte 272 about 11 miles. The road ends at the parking lot.] Leader: Leslie Fisher, gonbrdn@dol.net.

H Frederick. Lilypons Water Gardens. Mike Welch will lead a joint Frederick-Montgomery trip to this popular local birding spot. We'll look for Nelson's Sparrow and other fall migrants. Please call Mike at 301-685-3561 to let him know you are coming.

H Harford. Rocks SP. Meet 7:30 AM at the Park Office on Rocks-Chrome Hill Rd. Explore this scenic area for turkeys, warblers, and hawks. Contact the leader, Dennis Kirkwood, at 410-692-5905 or dkirkw@verizon.net.

H Howard. Mt. Pleasant Farm [DeLorme 57-B5]. 2-3 hrs. Meet 8 AM at parking lot. Easy walking through the fields of the farm. Tree lines, hedgerows and streams provide opportunity for non-meadow species. Prime time for sparrows. Great opportunity for flyovers. Facilities available. Leader: Kurt Schwarz, 410-461-1643, krschwa1@verizon.net.

H Montgomery. Lilypons Water Gardens. Half day. A joint Montgomery/Frederick Co Bird Club trip to this southern Fred Co hotspot. Target species include American Bittern, Nelson's Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, and a variety of raptors. Meet at Lilypons at 7:30 AM. For reservations (required) and directions, contact leader: Mike Welch, 301-685-3561 or manddwelch@comcast.net.

Sunday, October 11

BIG SIT. Anne Arundel. Kinder Farm Park. Coordinators: Tom and Sharon Bradford, 410-987-0674.

H Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. See Sep 6 for details. Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

H BIG SIT. Cecil. Turkey Point. Birding's most sedentary event. Our BIG SIT count circle will be based at the big cedar tree near the lighthouse at Turkey Point. Sean McCandless and Chris Starling will be official counters. All are welcome, so pack some food and drink and come out to join us. Chris will start at 4:30 AM; you can come whenever you like and stay as long as you want. It is not necessary to contact the leaders beforehand, just come on out any time during the day. For info, contact Sean at seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

H BIG SIT. Montgomery. Join the Sitting Ducks at Black Hill RP, starting at dawn and continuing until ? Come for the day or just a few hours. Meet at the dike across the road from the park boat ramp. Leader: TBA. Questions? Call Field Trip Coordinator Linda Friedland at 301-983-2136.

H Talbot. Spocott Farm, Dorchester Neck District, home of George Radcliffe. Leader: Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002. Breakfast hosts: Jackie and George Radcliffe. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Tuesday, October 13

MEETING. Allegany/Garrett. Speaker: None. Description: Show 10-20 of your best bird and nature photos. Club members or other interested parties wishing to submit photos should contact J.B. Churchill before Thurs, Oct 8, to make arrangements to have their photos included in the presentation. If there are not many submissions, we will defer to some of the state's "not-so-amateur photographers" to fill in the blanks. Come prepared to "ooh" and "aaah." 7:30 PM at Compton Hall, Rm 327, Frostburg State U. Contact: J.B. Churchill, jchurchi@atlanticbb.net.

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Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. See Sep 1 for details. Leader: Kevin Graff, 410-557-2456 or whitemarlin2001@yahoo.com.

Wednesday, October 14

MEETING. Cecil. Program TBA. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church at Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Thursday, October 15

MEETING. Caroline. *David Brinker.* "What a Wonderful Bird Is the Brown Pelican... Brown Pelicans in Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay." 7:30 PM, Caroline Co Public Library, 100 Market St, Denton.

Saturday, October 17

Baltimore. Hawk Mountain. All-day trip to see migrating hawks and magnificent scenery in PA. Leave Timonium P&R at 7 AM to arrive at the famous site about 10 AM. Hawks can be spotted as tiny dots a couple of miles away as they approach, and some pass overhead for nice close-up views. \$5 trail fee charged by the Hawk Mountain Association, which maintains the site. (See web site www.hawkmountain.org for more details.) Rain date: Sat, Oct 24. Leader: Pete Webb, 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com.

Baltimore. Saturday Monitoring Walks at Fort McHenry. See Sep 2 listing. Meet at Visitor Center. Leader: Jim Peters, 410-429-0966.

Howard. Sparrow Big Day. Full day. Search the wetlands and dry fields in this intensive search for as many sparrows as possible. Going for 12 species! Previous years have turned up non-sparrow rarities. Expect difficult walking for most of the day. Knee boots a must. Limit: 12. Call Bonnie Ott to sign up and get info at 410-461-3361. Facilities at some spots.

Sunday October 18

Baltimore. Cylburn Self-guided Walk. See Sep 6 for details.

Coordinator: Joe Lewandowski, 410-358-7834 or ilenel@juno.com.

Harford. Cromwell Valley Park. Meet 7:30 AM at the Rte 147/152 P&R. This county park always has surprises during late fall migration. Join leaders Dave Larkin and Lynn Davis in search of the unexpected. Contact Dave Larkin at 410-569-8319 or dlarkin@towson.edu or contact Lynn Davis at 410-569-0504 or lynnnd@iximd.com.

Montgomery. Hugh Mahanes Presidents' Walk. Half day. For our traditional Presidents' Walk, participation of all former Chapter Presidents is encouraged and everyone is welcome. This is a wonderful chance for newer birders to be in the field with "old hands" who enjoy sharing what they know. Meet 7:30 AM at the parking lot at the end of Riley's Lock Rd off River Rd. Bring lunch for a post-walk picnic. Reservations not required. For more info, contact Jim Nelson at kingfishers2@verizon.net or 301-530-6574.

Talbot. Black Walnut Point for autumn birds of woodlands and bayshore and late fall migrants and hawks. Leader: Andrew Bullen, 410-763-8156. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 6:30 AM or meet at St. Michaels Village Shopping Center at 7 AM.

Tri-County. Prime Hook NWR for waterfowl, raptors, and sparrows. Meet 7:30 AM in Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art parking lot on S Schumaker Dr on Beaglin Park Dr in Salisbury. Contact leader Betty Pitney, 410-543-1853, for more info. Bring lunch and drinks. Call leader for alternative meeting arrangements.

Tuesday October 20

Baltimore. Lake Roland. Meet 8:30 AM. See Sep 1 for details. Leader TBA. Contact Pete Webb at pete_webb@juno.com for more info.

Wednesday, October 21

MEETING. Montgomery. "My Big Photographic Year." *George Jett.* In

2008, George took on an impossible-sounding challenge—not only to see but to photograph 300 species of birds in Maryland in a single year—as a fund-raiser to protect the Blue-billed Curassow. Come hear his adventures and the results of this quest. 7:30 PM at Potomac Presbyterian Church, 10301 River Rd, Potomac. For more info, contact Steve Pretl at stevep@takomavillage.org.

Thursday, October 22

Howard. David Force Park [DeLorme 57-B5]. 2 hrs. Streams and pond provide habitat for numerous bird species. Meet 8 AM at the sign on Pebble Beach Dr. Leader: Jo Solem, 301-725-5037 or odenata@msn.com. No facilities.

Saturday, October 24

Baltimore. Rain date for Hawk Mountain trip. See Oct 17 listing.

Cecil. Buteos at the Turkey Point Hawk Watch. A walk through the woods and fields will bring you to the Hawk Watch station to see if buteos are on the move. Learn to tell the difference between immature and adult plumages, and to ID a bird that is a mere speck in the sky. See Oct 10 listing for directions, etc. Leader: Sean "Bird Dog" McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Frederick. Fall at Audrey Carroll. David Smith will lead a trip to see what new birds we can add to the already extensive list for this extraordinary sanctuary. Please call David at 410-549-7082 if you are coming.

Sunday, October 25

Anne Arundel. Hawk Mountain, PA. This trip will leave at 5 AM from the Severna Park P&R; we will stop for breakfast along the way. Bring a lunch. Leader: Larry Zoller, 410-987-9354.

Harford. Eden Mill Park. A joint trip with the Harford Land Trust to highlight properties protected in part by the efforts of the Trust. Join us at 8 AM for a morning of birding

along Deer Creek and Big Branch. Waterfowl, raptors, and songbirds expected. Leader: Les Eastman, 410-734-6969 or les@birdtreks.com.

H Howard. West Friendship Park [DeLorme 57-B4]. Moderate walking along field edges and through stream valleys; expect wet areas. Small ponds may hold some surprises. Meet 8 AM at shopping center just west of Rte 32 and Rte 144. Will carpool to nearby park. Leader: Jeff Culler, 410-465-9006 or cullerfuls@hotmail.com. No facilities.

H Talbot. Wades Point. Leader: Les Roslund, 410-763-8169. Breakfast hosts: Linda and Paul Makosky. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Monday, October 26

MEETING. **Tri-County.** "Maryland Big Year, 2009" by *Ron Gutberlet*. 7 PM at Asbury Methodist Church, Fox Rm, south entrance, Camden Ave, Salisbury.

Tuesday, October 27

MEETING AND POT LUCK. **Washington.** Dinner starts at 6:15 PM. Please bring your own place setting and a dish to share. Meeting follows at 7:30 PM, when *Beth Zang* will present "A Holistic Approach to Bird Conservation in Peru." Mt. Aetna Nature Center. Call 301-797-8454 for directions.

Wednesday, October 28

H Montgomery. Western Montgomery County Mixed Bag. Half-day trip looking for sparrows, ducks, and who knows what else. Meet 7:30 AM at Hughes Hollow parking lot. Plan on doing some walking through wet grass in several locations throughout the county. No reservations needed. For further info, call leader, Dave Powell, at 301-540-8776.

Saturday, October 31

H Harford. Halloween Owl Prowl. Join leaders Sue Procell and Donna Yorkston as they search the Edgewood/Joppatowne area for

our local hat-trick of owl species: Eastern Screech, Barred, and Great Horned. Black cats and goblins also likely. With a little luck, some other surprises may make an appearance. Call Sue at 410-676-6602 or Donna at 443-562-8501 for time and meeting place.

Sunday, November 1

H Howard. Centennial Park [DeLorme 57-C5]. 2-3 hrs. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Early waterfowl, lingering migrants likely. Leader: TBA. Call Bonnie Ott for more info at 410-461-3361. Facilities available.

H Talbot. Duvall Farm (Akridge property) for waterfowl, a variety of sparrows, and early winter birds. Leader: Wayne Bell, 410-820-6002. Breakfast hosts: Joyce and Wayne Bell. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Tuesday, November 3

MEETING. **Baltimore.** Tuesday Evening Lecture at Cylburn Mansion. Continuing series. "Using Song and Molecular Genetics to Understand Species Boundaries in the Orchard Oriole Complex." *Rachael Sturge*, PhD student at UMBC. Doors open at 7 PM for socializing and snacks, show starts about 7:15 PM. For more info, contact Pete Webb at 410-486-1217 or pete_webb@juno.com. For directions, see Sep 1 listing.

Wednesday, November 4

H Baltimore. First Wednesdays at Fort McHenry. See Sep 2 listing. Meet at Visitor Center. Leader: Mary Chetelat, 410-665-0769.

Thursday, November 5

MEETING. **Frederick.** *Wil Hersberger* will entertain, educate, and amaze us with the symphonies created by our smallest winged creatures in a program entitled "The Songs of Insects." 7 PM at the C. Burr Artz Library, Frederick.

H Indicates Field Trip

Friday, November 6

MEETING. **Anne Arundel.** "Sixty Years of Finding and Studying Birds: My Life as a Naturalist" by *Don Messersmith*, Master Birder, Naturalist, and Professor Emeritus, U. of MD. 8 PM at the Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center, 975 Indian Landing Rd, Millersville. Contact Peter Hanan, 410-672-5672, for more info.

MEETING. **Harford.** "When Birds Collide—Birdstrike Identification at the Smithsonian." *Dr. Carla Dove*, research scientist at the Museum of Natural History, discusses the identification of bird species from feathers and feather fragments following bird strikes (such as the one involving US Airways Flight 1549 in Jan 2009, aka "the Miracle on the Hudson"). Dinner at 6:15 PM, program at 7 PM at Churchville Presbyterian Church, MD 22 and MD 136. For info/dinner reservations, call Dave Webb, 410-939-3537.

H Washington. Lambs Knoll Banding Station. Observe Steve Huy band Northern Saw-whet Owls. Wear sturdy shoes, bring a flashlight, and be prepared to stay as late as midnight. Meet at the Boonsboro P&R at 9:30 PM. Last-minute cancellation possible due to wind or rain. Call Anna Hutzell at 301-797-8454 to participate.

Saturday, November 7

MEETING AND ANNUAL BANQUET. **Allegany/Garrett.** Speaker and program TBA. 6 PM at Frostburg United Methodist Church. Contact J.B. Churchill at jchurchi@atlanticbb.net for more info.

H Baltimore. Loch Raven. Waterbirds and landbirds. Possible Bald Eagle, Eastern Bluebird, and Common Loon. Scopes useful. Two-mile level walk. Meet 8 AM. [From I-695, take exit 27/Dulaney Valley Rd north, go several miles, cross large bridge over reservoir, and bear right immediately. Continue to first left, Stone Hill Rd.

Calendar continued from page 21

Go about 100 yards, turn around, and then park on right. All cars need to park on the same side of the road. Leader: Peter Lev, 410-823-2962 or plev@comcast.net.

Sunday, November 8

Howard. Centennial Park [DeLorme 57-C5]. 2-3 hrs. Easy walking on paved path around Centennial Lake. Woodlands, fields, and water host a wide variety of species. Great view of the sky for flyovers. Meet 8 AM at west end parking lot. Leader: TBA. Call Bonnie Ott for more info at 410-461-3361. Facilities available.

Montgomery. Lois Y. Green Conservation Park, Gaithersburg. Half day. Explore the varied habitats of this new 204-acre park. Songbirds, raptors, and waterfowl are possible. Meet 7:30 AM at parking lot on Snouffer School Rd. Reservations required. For detailed directions and reservations, call leader: Ed Patten, 301-948-5648.

Talbot. Wye Island for waterfowl, raptors, and winter sparrows. Leader: Danny Poet, 410-827-8651. Breakfast hosts: Margaret and Ernie Maher. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Wednesday, November 11

MEETING. Cecil. Program TBA. 7 PM on the lower level of Wesley United Methodist Church at Old Chestnut Rd and Justice Way. For info, contact Sean McCandless, seanmccandless1@comcast.net.

Montgomery. LBJs at Blue Mash Nature Trail, Olney. Blue Mash is a good place to work on the basics of sparrow ID, notably common species like Song, Field, and Chipping, while keeping an eye out for less-likely White-crowned and Swamp. This trip is primarily for beginners but all are welcome. Half day. For reservations, time, and directions, contact leader: Lydia Schindler, 301-977-5252 or lydiaschindler@verizon.net.

Thursday, November 12

MEETING. Talbot. Speaker: Craig Highfield, Coordinator, Forestry for the Bay, Chesapeake Bay Program. Craig will talk about woodland management as it relates to bird species and the health of our waterways. 7 PM at William Hill Manor Auditorium, Easton. Info: Cathy Cooper, coopercw@goeaston.net.

Saturday, November 14

Anne Arundel. Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary. Dotty Mumford, 410-849-8336, will lead this half-day trip. Meet 8 AM at Parole P&R.

Cecil. Avalon Sea Watch. Join us for a car-pool trip to Avalon, NJ. The oceanfront town of Avalon is on a barrier island, at a point where the shoreline bulges outward into the Atlantic—making it possible to get fantastic looks at a steady stream of migrating seabirds. This trip involves no walking at all; pull your car up to the seawall at our watch site and take out your lawn chair, blanket, scope, and hot drink, and settle in for a day of scanning the seas. Meet near Dunkin' Donuts at Big Elk Mall, intersection of Rtes 40 and 213 in Elkton, at 7 AM. Bring scope if you have one. Dress for possibly extremely cold and windy conditions. Remember money for tolls and gas. Leader: Richard Donham, donhamr@zoominternet.net.

Harford. Swan Harbor Farm Park. A joint trip with the Harford Land Trust to highlight properties protected in part by the efforts of the Trust. This site is well-known for eagles, field birds, waterfowl, and marsh specialties. Meet 8 AM at the parking lot adjacent to the Agricultural Education Center. Contact the leader, Dennis Kirkwood, at 410-692-5905 or dkirkw@verison.net.

Howard. Howard Waterfowl Search. Plan to visit Columbia's lakes to search for gulls, ducks, grebes, loons, and other waterbirds. Easy walking. Plan to carpool. Bring lunch and drinks. Scopes helpful. Meet 8 AM at Broken Land Pkwy

parking lot at Lake Elkhorn. Facilities available. Leader: TBA. Call Bonnie Ott for more info at 410-461-3361.

Sunday, November 15

Frederick. Birding for Beginners at Lilypons. We especially welcome children on this walk through Lilypons, where we will delight and inspire young (and young-at-heart) inquisitive new birders. Contact Pat Caro at 301-845-6246 for info.

Howard. Centennial Park [DeLorme 57-C5]. 2-3 hrs. See Nov 1 listing. Leader: TBA. Call Bonnie Ott for more info at 410-461-3361. Facilities available.

Talbot. Pickering Creek Audubon Center for waterfowl, Winter Wren, wintering sparrows, and other grassland birds. Leaders: Karen Harris, 410-770-8303, and Amanda Spears, 856-628-3559. Depart Easton Acme parking lot at 7 AM.

Tri-County. Chincoteague NWR for coastal migrants. Leaders: Jean and Larry Fry, 410-208-4269. Meet 7:30 AM in Ward Museum of Wildfowl Art parking lot on S Schumaker Dr on Beaglin Park Dr in Salisbury, or at refuge Visitor Center at 9 AM.

The Society notes with sadness the recent deaths of

- Nancy D. Rowe, a past president of the Baltimore chapter of MOS and a former member of the MOS Board
- Carol Flora, a past president of the Harford Bird Club

Honoring 50 Years of Membership

At the May 2009 Conference in Frederick, the Society paid honor to 20 members who joined MOS 50 or more years ago and have maintained an unbroken, active membership ever since. In recognition of their long-time, dedicated support of the Society, each 50-Year Member received a certificate prepared by John Malcolm, as well as a pin featuring a Baltimore Oriole. (The company that makes our conference pins was kind enough to create a 50-year pin on very short notice.)

Among the honorees was one Charter Member, Stephen W. Simon. Four of our 50-year members were present to receive their certificate and pin in person: Chandler S. Robbins, Stuart B. Robbins, John S. Weske, and Dot Gustafson. The others, who have received their certificates and pins through the mail, are Harry T. Armistead, J. Helen Coggins, Serene Collmus, Harriet Critchlow, Samuel H. Dyke, Shirley and Raymond Geddes, Joyce Gorsuch, Terry Moore, Cynthia Ramsey, Sally Rowe, Pauline E. Vollmer, Jack Weaver, Mrs. Charles P. Winsor, and Jean R. Worthley. These persons have been designated HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS by vote of the MOS Board of Directors.

This program will become an annual event at future conferences. Next year we will honor persons who joined in 1960.

—Don Messersmith
MOS Historian

and in reply...

Dear Don,

Thank you so much for the MOS 50-year pin and certificate. I am sure determining who is eligible to receive these involved a lot of sleuthing, effort, and time. A nice, appreciated gesture for those recognized.

For the first time this year I have started to don selected birding regalia, just as (well, maybe not “just as”) General Douglas MacArthur would sometimes wear only his Medal of Honor ribbon.

On my favorite baseball cap (“Bering Air—Kotzebue to Nome” [but, hypocritically, I’ve never been to Alaska]) I sport pins of my 50 years with the VSO, 500 hrs. of volunteer service at Blackwater, and now the MOS pin. What the military used to refer to as “fruit salad.”

No one has saluted so far. The strewing of palm fronds and rose petals has been, at best, muted and understated. Perhaps the NEXT time I attend a field trip, a brass ensemble will play the Grand March from Aida

But, seriously, I thank you. Such gestures are heartening.

Best regards,
Harry Armistead

Sanctuary Haven for Sale

Some 45 years ago Jennings Shivers subdivided his 108 acres in Talbot County. He kept 1.2 acres for himself and sold the rest to MOS to form the basis of the Mill Creek Sanctuary. He built a house on his land and lived there until his recent death. His heirs have now put the house, which is about 2.5 miles south of Wye Mills, on the market.

Because of its unique situation—surrounded on three and one quarter sides by the Mill Creek Sanctuary—the house may be of special interest to MOS members or other birders or nature-lovers. The single-story, brick house has 3-4 bedrooms, 2 full baths, and a full basement. The property is situated about 2,000 feet west of US Rte 50; the lot bounds the south side of MD Route 662. Anyone seriously interested in pursuing this property can contact the listing realtor, Bob Mielke, at 410-310-0500 in Easton.

—Les Roslund

LAST CALL

...for **Fall Count data**. Submit to county coordinator by Oct 9.

...for **Research Proposals**, deadline Dec 1.
For info, contact David Ziolkowski,
443-299-8453.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Snoring Bird: My Family's Journey through a Century of Biology, by Bernd Heinrich • Ecco/HarperCollins Publishers, 2006. 461 pp. Illustrated. (\$29.95.)



Having been a fan of Bernd Heinrich's writings on nature in general and ravens in particular, I looked forward to reading this book. It turned out to have not much to do with the Snoring Bird of the title and much to do with his father's life and career. In 1932 Gerd Heinrich published *Der Vogel Schnarch* (*The Snoring Bird*), an account of his two-year trip to the Celebes in search of the elusive jungle species, Snoring Rail (*Aramidopsis plateni*). (It gets its name from its curious rumbling call.) However, Gerd was really passionate only about wasps—specifically, collecting and classifying specimens of the prodigious family of parasitichneumon wasps.

Drawing extensively on letters and journals as he cleans out his late father's attic, Bernd Heinrich paints a picture of the bucolic life his father led before being conscripted into the German army—where some of his actions as a soldier, pilot, and Luftwaffe officer in the two World Wars were not acceptable to Bernd. Gerd was also quite a womanizer, falling in and out of love frequently and marrying several times.

It was on the 1,300-hectare Polish estate of Borowke that Gerd acquired his zeal for the ichneumonidae, and it was at Borowke that Bernd, born in 1940, spent his early years. In 1945, however, the family barely escaped the advancing Red Army. They took refuge in a forest cabin near Hamburg, where for the next six years Berndt found himself in “a child's paradise.” Here he developed a love of nature and a love for birds. (He kept a pet raven and put

drawings of it in his journal.) His descriptions of these years are wonderful and very detailed. But the family was threatened with famine, and Bernd and his sister became hunter-gatherers, searching for anything edible; dead boar and elk they found in the forest made for a change from fried mice.

In 1951, Gerd Heinrich arranged for the family to flee to sanctuary in the United States. They managed to settle in Maine, where father, mother, Bernd, and his sister lived with no electricity, no radio, and kerosene lamps. To save on kerosene, they'd blow out the light and, wrapped in blankets to keep warm, tell stories of their past lives. Still, the father did put his two children in “a school for deprived children” while he and his wife went off hunting for wasps. And Bernd sustained a harrowing experience with poison ivy.

This is a story of father and son and how each in his own way made nature the central focus of his life, and not always happily. While the father remained fixed on classifying and collecting, Bernd's love of nature took a more modern path. He was interested in ecosystems, behavior, and evolution. Bernd was initially an insect man, too. He worked out the co-evolution between bumblebees and plants, for example, before turning to the works that many of us know well, such as *Raven in Winter* and *Winter World*. Bernd Heinrich is a wonderful writer who imparts the wonder around him to his readers; this volume, however, is not a bird book but a moving memoir and homage to his father.

—Stephanie Lovell
Montgomery Bird Club